

# The Guardian

119 Farringdon Road  
London EC1R 3ER  
Telephone 020-7278 2332

December 3 2003

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you with a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 USC 552.

AKA RR (10 pages)

My request relates to Bob Marley, the reggae singer. Born on February 6 1945, he popularised reggae throughout the United States of America and other parts of the world. With his band the Wailers, he had a string of hits during the 1970s, releasing albums such as *Survival* and *Uprising*. He frequently travelled in and out of the United States of America. He was also a strong follower of the Rastafarian faith. He also became involved in politics in Jamaica in the early 1970s, particularly in an informal alliance with the then Prime Minister Michael Manley. In 1979, he was forced to leave Jamaica after he was shot in the chest after appearing at political rallies in support of Michael Manley. In 1980, he returned to Jamaica and gave a concert in Kingston at which he attempted to reconcile the two main political parties headed by Michael Manley and Edward Seaga. Diagnosed with cancer in 1977, he died in Miami on May 11, 1981 (His full name was Robert Nesta Marley).

Under the act, I am requesting any and all records held by the Federal Bureau of Investigation on Bob Marley. I believe that, since he has died, there are no considerations of privacy or intrusions

FOIA regulations provide that if some material is properly exempt from mandatory disclosure, all segregable portions must be released. If the requested material is released with deletions, I ask that each deletion be marked to indicate the exemption (s) being claimed to authorise each particular withholding. Also, I ask that your department exercise its discretion to release records which may be technically exempt, but where withholding serves no important public interest.

I am enclosing some material which I hope will aid your search for responsive material.

I am a reporter and intend to use the information gained through this request in articles for the Guardian newspaper which is published in London, Britain and is also available in the United States of America as well as the internet.

The release of this information would be in the public interest, and inform public debate and public understanding of US government activities.

I therefore ask that all search and copying fees associated with this request be waived. If however there are any costs associated with this

request, please notify me beforehand if they are to exceed \$15.

For administrative reasons, I would be grateful if you could send  
your replies to:  Britain RH4 3HT.

b6

I am willing to discuss my request and can be contacted on   
 in Britain or via

Thank you for your help. I look forward to hearing from you in the  
near future.

Yours sincerely,



ROB EVANS

Reporter

# Bob Marley, the eloquent ambassador of reggae

## OBITUARY

The death of Bob Marley, aged 36, from cancer yesterday robs Jamaican music of its first ambassador, and popular music in general of one of its most eloquent powerful and conscientious voices.

Over the past 10 years Marley has been almost single handedly responsible for introducing reggae music to an international audience, and with it, the first popular knowledge of the Rastafarian faith which he followed

and always espoused. Marley became a figure of incalculable influence and inspiration to the young in Jamaica. In 1945, the son of an English army captain and a Jamaican woman, he began his singing career in the early 1960s with the vocal group the Wailers, playing a form of reggae strongly influenced by his personal exposure to and love of American rhythm and blues artists such as the Impressions.

The beautifully melodic quality which surfaced in Marley's work, allied to the irresistible reggae rhythm and the potent conviction of his lyrical messages which was to make Marley the first reggae artist to achieve recognition in the popular market, beginning with the album *Catch a Fire* in 1972. When other rock performers recorded his work—such as Eric Clapton, "I shot the

British charts last year with the album *Uprising* and last performed here at the Crystal Palace garden party in 1980. Marley achieved the rare feat of being a popular figure, feted and lionised by the chic and the powerful, while remaining aloof to it all and without compromising his credibility as a spokesman for millions of young blacks. He was obliged to leave Jamaica in 1979 after he was shot in the chest following appearances at public rallies in support of the then Prime Minister, Michael Manley.

Eighteen months after the attempt on his life, Marley returned to Jamaica and gave a concert at Kingston in a new spirit of reconciliation. Marley, then Prime Minister, and the Opposition leader Edward Seaga, appeared on stage with him, alongside notorious gunmen from the two political parties.

It is for his conviction, his integrity and his commitment to his faith that he will be missed, as much for the time less splendour of the music he produced—M. B.



The Guardian: Trial Site

**THE TIMES**

Digital Archive 1785-1985

Article @ 133%

Print



Article 3 of 26



The Times, Tuesday, May 12, 1981, pg 5, Issue 60925, col G

Bob Marley dies at 36

Category: Obituaries

## Bob Marley dies at 36

New York, May 11—Bob Marley, the Jamaican reggae star, died today in Miami after a long battle against cancer of the brain. He was 36.

Mrs Rita Marley, his wife, said her husband had been receiving treatment from Dr Josef Issels at his clinic in Rottrach Egera near Munich.

His illness was discovered last September when he underwent tests after falling

Marley often spiced his music with references to Jamaica's Rastafarian cult to

which he belonged. Working with the Wailers, his back-up group, he became one of the leading exponents of reggae, a music that combines rhythm and blues with soul and calypso.

His hits included "Simmer Down", "No Woman, No Cry", "Jammin'", "Bad Card", "Stir It Up" and "Guava Jelly".

Born in the Jamaican parish of St Ann to a Jamaican mother and a British Army captain father, he became a musician at 17.

Full Text: Copyright 1981, The Times

Article CS84773036

View other articles linked to these subjects.

View Linked Documents

- [View articles starting in same page](#)
- [Articles in same category](#)

Print, e-mail, and other retrieval options

Browser Print—Full Content—

Reformat article for printing from your browser



The Guardian: Trial Site

**THE TIMES**

Digital Archive 1785-1985

Article @ 133%

Print



Article 6 of 26

The Times, Wednesday, May 13, 1981, pg 16, Issue 60926, col G  
Bob Marley

Category: Obituaries

**BOB MARLEY**

**Bob Marley**, the singer and composer of reggae music who died on May 11, was the figure most responsible for disseminating the popular music of Jamaica around the world during the 1970s.

His uncompromising songs, style and attitudes provided a rare and powerful example for young West Indians, particularly those living in Britain, to whom he presented the elements of a cultural identity. It was a position he never abused, and last week he was awarded the Jamaican Order of Merit by his country's Prime Minister, Mr Edward Seaga.

Robert Nesta Marley was born on April 6, 1945, in the parish of St Ann, near Kingston; his mother was a Jamaican woman, his father, whom he remembered meeting only twice, a serving captain in the British Army. During his adolescence, Marley gravitated quickly towards music and made his first record at the age of 19.

In 1965 Marley formed a group, the Wailers, with his fellow singers and composers Bunny Livingstone and Peter Tosh; they became popular within the Jamaican market, singing a light, lilting variation of the local idiom known as ska music. They became the first Jamaican artists to achieve fame abroad when, in 1972, they signed a recording contract with Island Records, the London-based company. Careful promotion, modern recording facilities and the energetic proselytising efforts of famous English musicians like Mick Jagger and Eric Clapton



on the popular imagination that politicians habitually attempted to elicit his endorsement, which he resolutely withheld. Nevertheless, in 1977 he was wounded by gunshots on his house in an attack which was said to have been politically motivated. He considered his finest hour to have been his appearance at the Zimbabwe independence celebrations, to which he was expressly invited by Dr Robert Mugabe.

Whether on stage or on record Marley conveyed a vivid intensity heightened by his use of the fiery biblical texts appropriated by the Jamaican cult of Rastafarianism, of which he was a prominent disciple. He was a deeply expressive singer and a composer whose range extended from the melodic lament of "No Woman No Cry" to inspiring and politically loaded dance tunes like

Although Livingstone and Tosh left the group, Marley reconstituted it and went on to even greater success, touring around the world and achieving enormous record sales in America, Africa and Europe. At home, he exerted such a hold

possessed an originality which would have ensured his preeminence in any type of popular music. Reggae will survive the loss of his unique vision, but it may never have another spokesman of such eloquence and broad appeal.

Full Text Copyright 1981, The Times

Article CS271419565

View other articles linked to these subjects

View Linked Documents

- [View articles starting in same page](#)
- [Articles in same category](#)

Print, e-mail, and other retrieval options

Browser Print—Full Content—

Reformat article for printing from your browser

[\[Standard article print\]](#)

To return to InfoTrac, use the *back* function of your browser

Acrobat Reader—Full Content—

View and print full newspaper page containing the article from Acrobat™ Reader [\[1 page portrait\]](#) [\[2 \(1/2\) pages landscape\]](#) [\[4 \(1/4\) pages portrait\]](#) Please allow a few minutes for the retrieval operation to complete

E-Mail Delivery—Citation Only—

We will send a plain text version to the e-mail address you enter (e.g. [bettyg@library.com](mailto:bettyg@library.com)).

E-Mail Address

Subject

(defaults to title)

**Submit E-mail Request**



Article 6 of 26



THOMSON  
GALE

[Copyright and Terms of Use](#)



The Guardian Trial Site

**THE GUARDIAN**

Digital Archive 1785-1985

Article @ 133%

Print

Article 14 of 26

The Times, Monday, May 25 1981, pg 6, Issue 60936, col E  
 Mark The folk hero who clung to his roots Richard Williams  
 Category News

## The folk hero who clung to his roots

Kingston Since Jamaica is almost certainly the only country whose Prime Minister once tried his hand at producing pop records, it is perhaps not surprising that the announcement of the annual budget was postponed by several days to accommodate the state funeral last week of [Bob Marley], the singer and composer who put reggae, the island's indigenous variety of popular music, on the international map.

The Prime Minister, Mr Edward Seaga, and Mr Michael Manley, who held the job until six months ago and now leads the opposition, were among the 6,000 who attended the funeral service at the National Arena in Kingston. Their appearance made a significant statement about the evolution of Jamaican society. Not least, it confirmed the unusually intimate relationship between reggae musicians and their audience, which looks to the latest songs not just for entertainment but for political bulletins and religious inspiration.

[Bob Marley] was a Rastafarian, the sect which owes its origins to the vision of Marcus Garvey, also Jamaican, who during the inter-war years promoted the idea of repatriation to Ethiopia. Garvey even went to the length of composing passages, but the scheme of his Black Star Line never set sail. Undeterred for several decades Rastafarians develop their doctrine of the divinity of

Haile Selassie and of the smoking of copious quantities of marijuana as a sacrament. Both these beliefs, and others, start with a rigorous and literal interpretation of the Bible. Notably the more apocalyptic passages of the Book of Revelation.

Their matted locks, their flamboyant display of the colours of the Ethiopian flag and their smoking habits made the Rastas into the untouchables of Jamaica, and for several decades they kept their heads down, living quietly in the hills while white Jamaicans and middle-class blacks arrogantly blamed them for the island's growing crime rate.

The majority of the population, however, looked on the Rastas with affection, respecting their devout attitude and seeing in the call for repatriation merely a vivid and easily understood metaphor for a better life. That view has gradually permeated upwards through Jamaican society, and the speeches at Marley's funeral indicated that it has finally reached the Government at Jamaica House.

The funeral rites were partly those of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, into which Marley was baptised just before his death, and the Twelve Tribes of Israel, the formal manifestation of Rastafarianism. The largely Rasta congregation greeted with noisy delight the closing words of Mr Seaga, who had cleverly calculated the effect of

ending his eulogy with an idiomatic benediction. "May his soul rejoice in the embrace of Jah Rastafari."

Mr Seaga had already aired some surprisingly pragmatic views about the contribution of the illegal marijuana crop to Jamaica's troubled economy, and this was the most explicit official recognition to date of the Rastafarians' position in the community.

The tensions of the funeral service were, in fact, mainly religious, caused by the differences between the Ethiopians and the Israelites. When Alan "Skill" Cole, the country's best known footballer and a close friend of Marley, went to the microphone to give a reading, he ignored the texts prepared for him by the Ethiopian elders and substituted verses from Isaiah and Corinthians which are particularly dear to Rastafarian hearts. As he read, there was angry muttering between the Ethiopian archbishop and his aides at the rear of the platform. The rest of the hall received Cole's small rebellion with riotous glee.

Cole was dressed, like many of those present, in the raiment of the Twelve Tribes: all in white, with the exception of a woolly tam o'shanter woven in the red, green and gold stripes of Ethiopia. These colours predominated in the procession later that day up the steep hill at Rhoden Hall, a hamlet 70 miles or so from Kingston, where Marley's body was taken

for interment in a hastily constructed mausoleum overlooking a scattering of small shacks. His heavy bronze coffin also contained a Bible, his electric guitar and a small quantity of marijuana unobtrusively inserted by his widow, Rita, before the casket was borne from the National Arena.

Rhoden Hall, set in verdant red clay hills at the end of a winding, roughly surfaced single-track road, was Marley's birthplace, and Rastas in their thousands had set off in their thousands to get there before the procession arrived. Police with sub-machineguns readied themselves for trouble but, despite the crush, disorder was minimal.

Next to the mausoleum, at the summit of the hill, stood a two-room shack, about 20ft by 5ft wide, which seemed to have been erected for distributing refreshments to the throng. It turned out that here, a dozen years ago, before his music made him the most internationally visible of all Jamaicans and a Third World hero, [Bob Marley] and his wife had lived in rural poverty. It was in that hut that their first child was born.

In taking leave of him, the people of Jamaica recognized that, whatever benefits fame and wealth had brought him, Marley had encouraged them by never straying far from those roots.

Richard Williams

Full Text Copyright 1981, The Times

Article CS102336697

View other articles linked to these subjects

View Linked Documents

- [View articles starting in same page](#)
- [Articles in same category](#)

Print, e-mail, and other retrieval options

Browser Print—Full Content—  
 Reformat article for printing from your browser  
[\[Standard article print\]](#)  
 To return to InfoTrac, use the back function of your browser

Acrobat Reader—Full Content—  
 View and print full newspaper page containing the article from Acrobat™ Reader  
[\[1 page portrait\]](#) [\[2 \(1/2\) pages landscape\]](#) [\[4 \(1/4\) pages portrait\]](#) Please allow a few minutes for the retrieval operation to complete

E-Mail Delivery—Citation Only—

We will send a plain text version to the e-mail address you enter (e.g. [bettyg@library.com](mailto:bettyg@library.com))E-Mail Address Subject   
(defaults to title)[Submit E-mail Request](#)





Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D.C. 20535

December 23, 2003

MR ROB EVANS  
THE GUARDIAN  
119 FARRINGDON ROAD  
LONDON EC1R 3ER

Request No.: 0989132- 000  
Subject: MARLEY, ROBERT NESTA

Dear Mr. Evan:

The records that you have requested were previously processed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act for another requester.

Enclosed are 10 pages of documents that are being furnished to you at no charge along with a copy of the Explanation of Exemption form (OPCA 16a).

You may submit an appeal from any denial contained herein by writing to the Co-Director, Office of Information and Privacy, U. S. Department of Justice, Suite 570, Flag Building, Washington, D. C. 20530-0001, within 60 days from the date of this letter. The envelope and the letter should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Appeal." Please cite the FOIA number assigned to your request in your letter so that your request may be easily identified.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Hardy", is positioned above the typed name.

Sincerely yours,

David M. Hardy  
Section Chief,  
Record/Information  
Dissemination Section  
Records Management Division

Enclosures-2